

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
May 11, 2006

Contact: Robert White
(202) 225-5074

Davis Applauds House Passage of Provision
Easing Security Clearance Crisis

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA-11th) applauded House passage of an amendment he offered with two colleagues to ease the crisis facing the defense contracting community caused by the recent Defense Department decision to stop processing security clearances.

Davis, Rep. Rob Simmons (R-CT), and Rep. Jo Ann Davis (R-VA), offered the amendment, which was accepted as part of the National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 5122) last night by a unanimous voice vote. The overall defense bill is expected to pass the House today.

In late April, Chairman Davis discovered that the Defense Security Service had placed a moratorium on all requests for private security clearances because the agency was running out of money to pay for the clearances. The abrupt stoppage affected not only contract employees awaiting new security clearances but those awaiting the renewal of the clearances as part of periodic reinvestigations.

The Davis amendment prevents the Defense Department from revoking expiring industry clearances solely on the basis that the Pentagon failed to plan adequately for the work volume. The prohibition would last until Defense is able to get a handle on the current crisis and resume processing requests for clearance investigations in a timely and efficient manner.

“We cannot put defense contractors in the position of having to choose between firing their employees or granting uncleared personnel access to classified material and facilities,” Davis said. “The federal government spends billions of dollars each year on defense contracts requiring workers with security clearances. If contractors are unable to find enough cleared personnel who have access to classified information, the cost of these contracts increases dramatically. The taxpayer will be forced to pick up the tab, and our national security will suffer.”